

## Message Text

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51

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

EB-07 COME-00 EUR-12 L-03 AGR-10 SS-15 NSC-05 AID-05

/078 W

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R 232147Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0166

INFO DIA WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 2182

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJ: PRESS COVERAGE OF UB SCANDAL

1. EL CRONISTA OF MAY 23 REPORTS THAT ON MAY 22 INVESTIGATING COMMISSION COORDINATOR JORGE ARTURO REINA SPOKE BEFORE AN ASSEMBLY OF STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY TO DETAIL THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION. ACCORDING TO THE NEWSPAPER, REINA SAID THAT WHILE THE COMMISSION WAS IN SWITZERLAND AN UNKNOWN PERSON FROM HONDURAS CONTACTED SWISS BANKING AUTHORITIES TO REQUEST THAT NO INFORMATION BE GIVEN TO THE COMMISSION.

2. THE LEND EDITORIAL OF THE MAY 23 EDITION OF LA PRENSA CLAIMED THAT CORPORATIONS (JURIDICAL PERSONS) CAN NOT BE TRIED FOR CRIMINAL ACTIONS AND ADDED THAT SINCE THE ACTUAL BRIBERY TOOK PLACE IN THE U.S. AND WAS NOT IN ITSELF ILLEGAL BY U.S. LAW, THE GOH CANNOT BRING CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST COMPANY OFFICERS. LA PRENSA SAID THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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THE ONLY LEGAL ACTION THAT THE GOH COULD TAKE WAS A CIVIL ACTION AGAINST UNITED BRANDS' LOCAL SUBSIDIARY.

3. IN SPACE PURCHASED BY AN UNKNOWN CLIENT, TIEMPO

OF MAY 23 REPRINTED A MAY 22 EDITORIAL FROM LA PRENSA UNDER THE HEADING, "THE CAMPAIGN HAS ALREADY BEGUN." THE CONTENTS OF THE LA PRENSA ARTICLE STATED A STRONG CASE AGAINST THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE FRUIT COMPANIES. THE PAID SPACE, TAKEN IN ITS ENTIRETY, IMPLIES THAT LA PRENSA IS BEING PAID TO CONDUCT A DEFENSE OF UNITED

BRANDS.

4. TIEMPO ALSO REPORTED THAT THE NEWLY-APPOINTED GOH BANANA ADVISORY COUNCIL WILL HOLD ITS FIRST SESSION MAY 26. TIEMPO'S LEAD EDITORIAL WAS VERY CRITICAL OF THE GOH DECISION TO FORM ANOTHER COMMISSION AS THE COWARD'S WAY OUT OF A DILEMMA. THE PAPER SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S PURPOSE IS TO AVOID MAKING A DECISION AND THE CREATION OF THE COUNCIL IS A METHOD TO "DILUTE THE REPOSABILITIES" OF THE GOVERNMENT. TIEMPO CAUTIONS THE BANANA COMPANY UNIONS AGAINST PARTICIPATING IN THE ADVISORY COUNCIL BECAUSE THE WHOLE PURPOSE IS TO ALLOW THE SCANDAL AFFAIR TIME TO COOL OFF SO NO ACTION WILL BE NECESSARY. SOWASH

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, CORRUPTION, CRIMES  
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**Decaption Note:**  
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**TAGS:** PINT, HO  
**To:** STATE INFO DIA  
USIA  
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GUATEMALA  
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